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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Ghana, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo and Zambia: revised draft resolution

Public administration and development

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Tangier Declaration, 1/ adopted by the Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Civil Service held in Morocco on 20 and 21 June 1994,

Recalling also its resolution 49/136 of 19 December 1994 on public administration and development,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council decision 1996/215 of 2 April 1996,

Bearing in mind the rapid pace and interdependence of global, political, social and economic developments, and their implications for all countries, particularly the developing countries, and that there is a critical need for improved efficiency and effective public institutions, administrative procedures and sound financial management to harness these challenges in support of sustainable development in all countries,

Affirming that States have the sovereign right and responsibility to decide, in accordance with their own development policy, strategies, needs and priorities, on their public administration management based on the rule of law,

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1/ See A/49/495, annex.

Acknowledging the diversity of experiences in public administrative systems as well as the political, social and economic circumstances of each country,

Recognizing that effectiveness of government requires an efficient and effective public administration in all countries that is responsive to the needs of the people, promotes social justice, ensures universal access to quality services and productive assets and creates an enabling environment for sustainable people-centred development,

Reaffirming the importance of enhancing the quality of public administration based, inter alia, on the participatory approach to development,

Recognizing the role of the United Nations in assisting Governments, at their request, in ensuring the maintenance of essential basic government services and functions during times of crisis and in developing strategies for rebuilding a viable public administration in countries undergoing post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction,

Taking note of the fact that the United Nations system, responding to requests from interested Member States, has contributed in support of their public administration to include wider aspects of governance, including democratic, legal and judiciary reform, and strengthening of the civil society,

Recognizing that Governments in all countries should make their procedures transparent in order to avoid and combat all acts of corruption,

Emphasizing the benefits to all countries of exchanging experiences and views in order to promote better understanding and applications of various roles and functions of government and public administration, and enhancing international cooperation in this field, including such exchanges within the context of South-South and interregional cooperation,

Recognizing the important role of the public sector in the development process and stressing the need to improve development and management of its human resources through, inter alia, appropriate national incentive measures,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on public administration and development 2/ and of the proposals contained therein;

2. Takes note also of the report of the Group of Experts in Public Administration and Finance; 3/

3. Takes further note of the reports of the regional meetings on public administration and development; 4/

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2/ A/50/847-E/1996/7.

3/ A/50/525-E/1995/122.

4/ A/50/904, A/50/917, A/50/919, A/50/920, A/50/921, A/50/929.

4. Recognizes that there exists challenges and trends variously facing national Governments in the field of public administration;

5. Reaffirms that democracy and transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society are indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development;

6. Underlines the importance of transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public and private national and international institutions;

7. Recognizes that there is a need for public administration systems to be sound, efficient and well equipped with the appropriate capacities and capabilities through, inter alia, capacity-building, promotion of transfer, access and utilization of technology, establishment or improvement of training programmes for public service, strengthening of partnership of the public sector with the private sector and civil society, as well as providing an enabling environment for private sector activities, as appropriate, promotion of the role and involvement of women in public administration, development of cross-sectoral gender-sensitive and multidisciplinary capabilities, which supports all phases of the development process as well as the promotion of opportunities for all to participate in all spheres of the public sector;

8. Reaffirms that Governments in all countries should promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, bearing in mind the interdependent and mutually reinforcing relationship between democracy, development and respect for human rights, and should make public institutions more responsive to people's needs;

9. Invites Governments to strengthen their public administrative and financial management capacities through public-sector administrative and management reform, with emphasis on enhanced efficiency and productivity, accountability and responsiveness of the public institutions, and encourages, where appropriate, decentralization of public institutions and services;

10. Recognizes the importance of the major United Nations conferences and urges the development of the necessary capabilities to enable public administration to implement the commitments agreed upon in an effective and coordinated manner;

11. Confirms the importance of and calls for enhancement of the effectiveness of United Nations activities in the area of public administration and development;

12. Stresses the importance of an increased synergy, cooperation and coordination between United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, the United Nations Secretariat and the Bretton Woods institutions to ensure that the substantive and technical capacity of the United Nations system is optimized;

13. Acknowledges that the role of United Nations activities and programmes in public administration and development is to assist Governments, at their

request, to improve their responsiveness to meet the basic needs of all, as well as to the achievement of sustainable development in all countries. The United Nations should focus its activities in the following areas as recommended by the Group of Experts in Public Administration and Finance in its report:

(a) Strengthening government capacity for policy development, administrative restructuring, civil service reform, human resources development and public administration training;

(b) Improving performance ... the public sector;

(c) Financial management;

(d) Public-private interaction;

(e) Social development;

(f) Developing infrastructure and protecting the environment;

(g) Government legal capacity;

(h) Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction of government machinery;

(i) Management of development programmes.

In this context, the United Nations should carry out these activities through pooling and facilitating access to information in public administration, promoting training and research in public administration and finance at all levels, advocacy and exchange of experiences, advisory services, technical assistance, capacity-building and human resources development;

14. Requests the United Nations to develop strategies, at the request of interested countries, for rebuilding a viable public administration in countries undergoing post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction;

15. Invites the Bretton Woods institutions and all relevant United Nations agencies and bodies to assist, at their request, Member States involved in economic restructuring programmes to pursue national policies aimed at improving the development and management of their human resources through, inter alia, appropriate measures;

16. Recognizes the increased national efforts of Member States in providing adequate financial and other resources for the strengthening of their public administration;

17. Invites the international community to create an enabling international environment and to consider providing adequate financial and other resources for programmes of assistance to support national efforts in enhancing the effectiveness of public administration in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

18. Recommends that the Secretary-General take appropriate measures in order to ensure maximum coordination of activities of the United Nations system in the field of public administration and development;

19. Calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure ways of strengthening the coordination, coherence and harmonization of the management and implementation of the operational activities of the United Nations system in the field of public administration and development;

20. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on public administration and development containing information on the implementation of the present resolution.

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